



Ardent Solutions
Network for Community Health

2022

ANNUAL REPORT



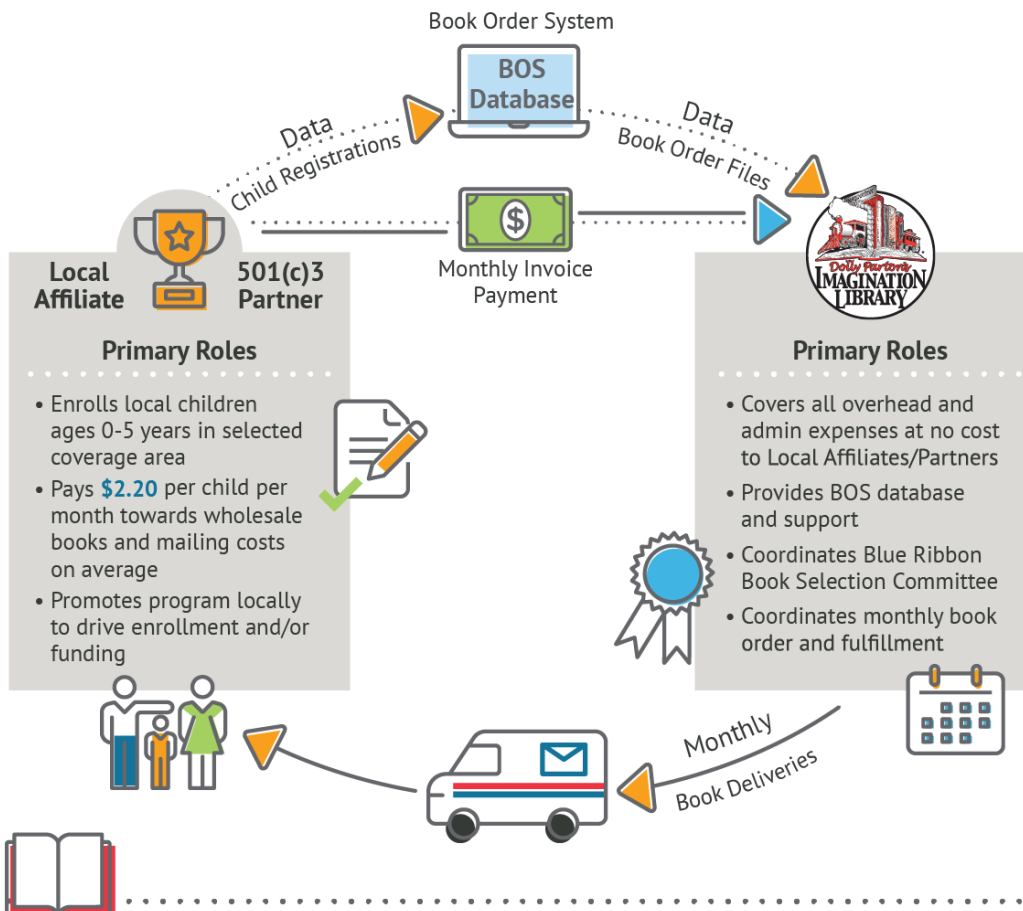
*Dream More, Learn More,
Care More, Be More*

Project Overview

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by gifting books free of charge to children from birth to age five, through funding shared by Dolly Parton and local community partners.

Each month, Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library mails a high quality, age- appropriate book to all registered children, addressed to them, at no cost to the child’s family. Countless parents have shared how excited their child is when their new book arrives each month. Many groups and individuals work hard behind the scenes to make that special moment possible for each child.

The Imagination Library provides the infrastructure of the core program including managing the secure central database for the Book Order System and coordinating book selections and wholesale purchasing. It also incurs the cost of the program’s administrative expenses and coordinates the monthly mailings.



- ▶ Local Affiliate may be a business, school district, solo, etc. Need 501(c)3 non-profit partner to get non-profit mailing rates
- ▶ Books arrive at child's home with name on the mailing label
- ▶ At no cost to the family, books are delivered monthly to children from birth to age 5 in a designated coverage area



Project Overview

The Imagination Library partners with Local Affiliates and Partners who help bring the program to cities, towns and communities around the world. Local Affiliates can be businesses, school districts, small or large organizations, or simply individuals who share in the mission and purpose of the Imagination Library. In Allegany County, Ardent Solutions represents the Local Affiliate and members of the Allegany County Early Childhood Development and Education Coalition are Partners.

Since March 2021, Ardent Solutions entered into its agreement with the Dollywood Foundation and is responsible for enrolling children who live within our geographical area. The Coalition Coordinator, a member of Ardent Solutions, and local Partners promote the program online and at events.

While the Imagination Library negotiates wholesale pricing for the books, Ardent Solutions is responsible for securing funds to cover that cost. Books are 100% free to enrolled children because Ardent Solutions works to secure funds to cover the cost of the books and the shipping fees. On average, Ardent Solutions is charged \$2.20 per book, per child, per month.

Books are selected by the Dollywood Foundation Blue Ribbon Book Selection Committee, a specially selected panel of early childhood literacy experts, who are responsible for reviewing hundreds of potential titles for inclusion in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

The Blue Ribbon Book Selection Committee takes great care in choosing books that meet the different needs of children as they progress from birth to age five. All books are published by Penguin Random House.

The first book a child receives is "The Little Engine That Could™" (customized version). The month a child turns five years old, they will receive "Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!" (customized version).



Project Overview

The following titles represent books selected for distribution in 2023:

Group 1 (Children born in 2023)

- Baby! Talk!
- Pudgy Pat A Cake
- Who Says Quack?
- Look at the Animals
- Baby Sounds
- Pudgy Book of Mother Goose
- Sleep Tight, Polar Bear (Little Loves)
- Can You Guess? Animal Sounds with The Very Hungry Caterpillar
- Roald Dahl Colors
- Llama Llama Hide & Seek
- Babies Love Animals (A Tummy Time Book)

Group 2 (Children born in 2022)

- Corduroy's Shapes
- Where is Your Nose?
- Home Builders
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar's First Summer
- Good Morning Farm Friends
- Richard Scarry's First 100 Words
- Little Poems for Tiny Ears
- Vehicles (Picture Show)
- Eric Carle's Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star and Other Nursery Rhymes
- Good Night Gorilla
- Llama Llama Red Pajama
- Tad and Dad

Group 3 (Children born in 2021)

- Dandelion Magic
- Green Tractor
- I Am a Rainbow
- The Big Slide
- Llama Llama Meets the Babysitter
- K is for Kindness
- Mine, Mine, Mine, Yours!
- Birding for Babies: Backyard Birds
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar Eats Breakfast
- Ice Cream Face
- Solitary Animals
- I Hear a Pickle

Project Overview

Group 4 (Children born in 2020)

- A Story for Small Bear
- This is the Tree We Planted
- Richard Scarry's Busy Busy People
- Raindrops to Rainbows
- Ocean Lullaby
- Baby Builders
- Just Try One Bite
- Somewhere Right Now
- The Snowy Day
- Donut
- Corduroy
- How We Say I Love You

Group 5 (Children born in 2019)

- Milo's Hat Trick
- Find Fergus
- There's a Monster in Your Book
- The Rabbit Listened
- Alex's Good Fortune
- When the Storm Comes
- Say Hello to a Worm
- Goldilocks & the Three Bears
- Grandpa & Jake
- Ten Ways to Hear Snow
- Coat of Many Colors
- The Night Before the Dentist

Group 6 (Children born in 2018)

- Spend It!
- In Our Garden
- Wild Horses
- You Can Be ABC
- Wonder Walker
- I'm Not Scared, You're Scared
- Drop
- Rabbit's Snow Dance
- A Gift for Nana
- The Tree in Me
- Carpenter's Helper

Impact

The Allegany County Dolly Parton Imagination Library enrollment in 2022 was as follows:

Group 1: 12 Children

Group 2: 152 Children

Group 3: 241 Children

Group 4: 252 Children

Group 5: 228 Children

Group 6: 164 Children

Total Children Enrolled: 1,049 (42% of total population of Allegany County children birth - age 5)

Every zip code in Allegany County is represented in enrollment data:

14707: 12 Children

14708: 4 Children

14709: 38 Children

14711: 52 Children

14714: 6 Children

14715: 69 Children

14717: 13 Children

14721: 2 Children

14727: 89 Children

14735: 81 Children

14739: 74 Children

14743: 1 Children

14744: 27 Children

14745: 1 Child

14754: 26 Children

14777: 17 Children

14802: 12 Children

14803: 18 Children

14804: 35 Children

14806: 58 Children

14813: 59 Children

14822: 17 Children

14880: 43 Children

14884: 2 Children

14895: 239 Children

14897: 28 Children

Bordering Communities: 26 Children

Impact

Parent Satisfaction Survey Results

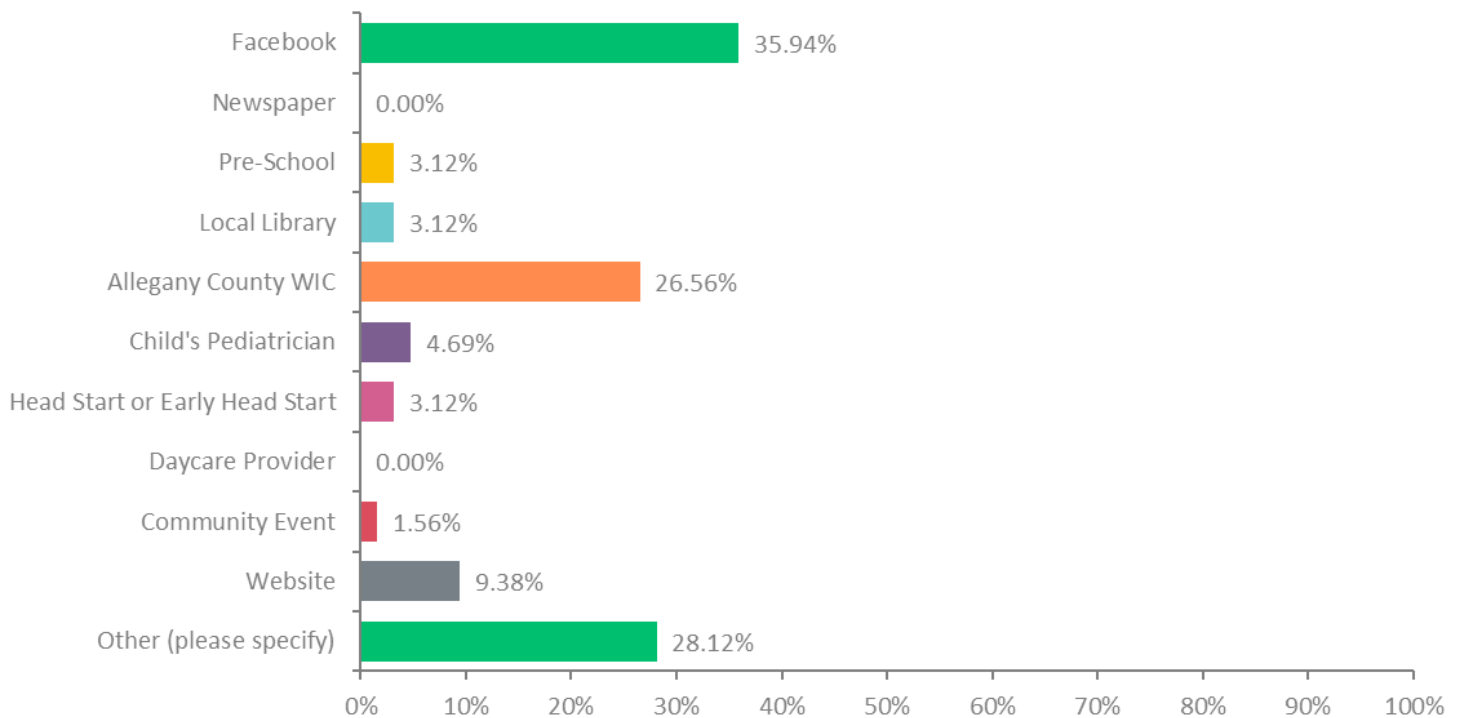
To better understand the impact of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library on Allegany County families with young children, Ardent Solutions conducted a parent survey in March 2023 with the following results:

Sampling Size

Number Parent Respondents: 64

Number of Children Enrolled: 91

When asked, "How did you hear about the Dolly Parton Imagination Library?" respondents indicated the following:

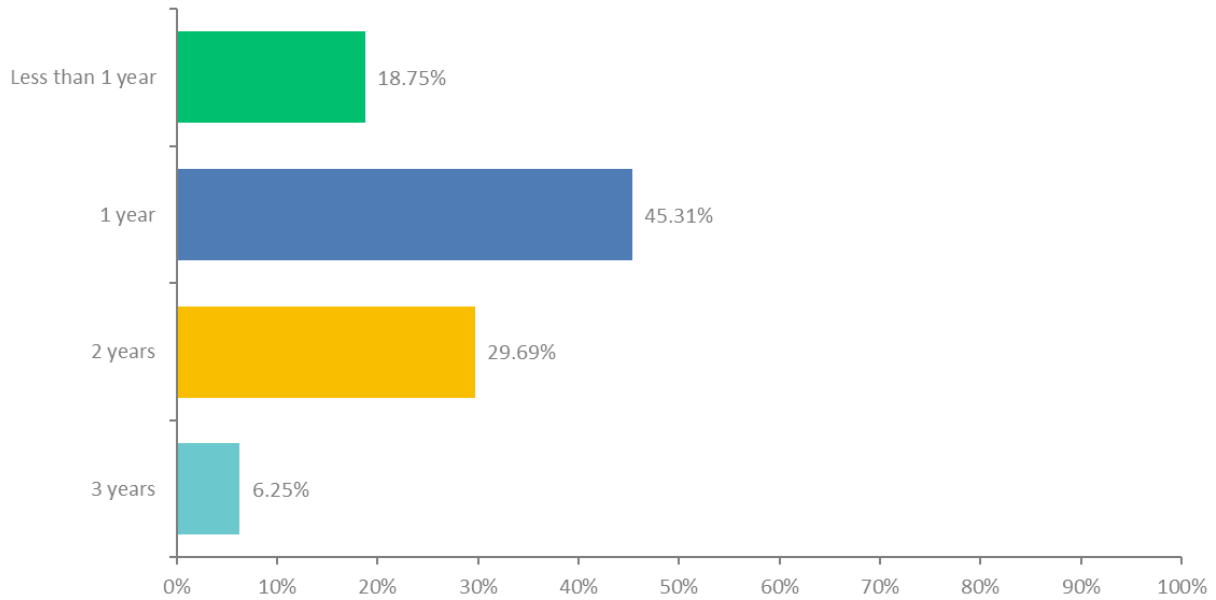


Responses in the "Other" category included the following themes:

- Word of Mouth from Family, Friends, and Co-Workers (11 responses)
- Family relocated from a DPIL community in Tennessee and transferred their enrollment to Allegany County (1 response)
- Member of the Early Childhood Development and Education Coalition (2)
- Allegany Arc (1)
- Every Bottom Covered (1)

Impact

The following demonstrates the length of time families have participated in DPIL. In its third year, program participation continues to grow with an approximate 10% monthly increase in enrollment from each previous month.

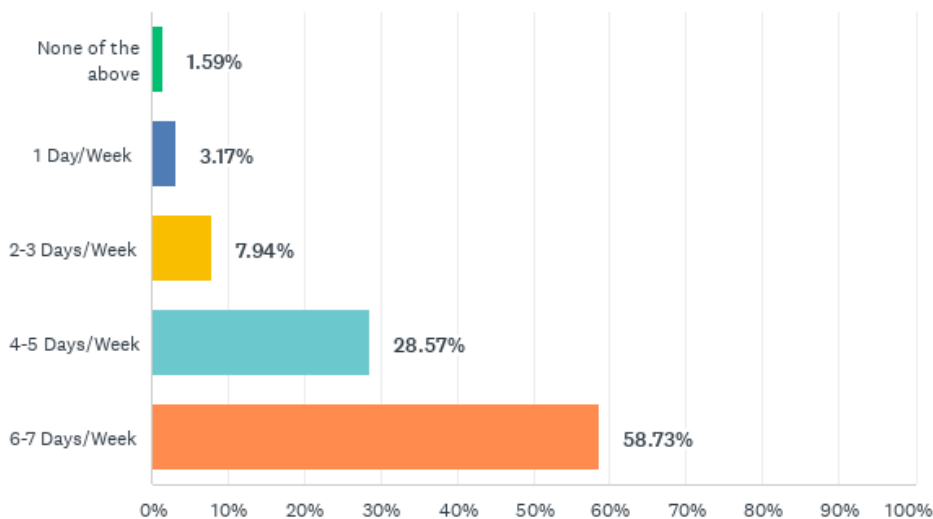


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To learn about the children's experience with DPIL, respondents were instructed to rate the following statements from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." The weighted average illustrates the overall average of responses on a scale of "1" to "4."

	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	DISAGREE (2)	AGREE (3)	STRONGLY AGREE (4)	N/A	WEIGHTED AVERAGE (1)-(4)
My child spends more time reading or enjoying books as a result of the DPIL.	0% (0)	3.13% (2)	35.94% (23)	54.69% (35)	6.25% (4)	3.55
My child looks forward to receiving his/her DPIL book in the mail each month.	1.56% (1)	0% (0)	20.31% (13)	65.63% (42)	12.5% (8)	3.71
My child has developed more language skills as a result of the DPIL (greater vocabulary, letter recognition, word recognition, etc.)	0% (0)	4.69% (3)	45.31% (29)	34.38% (22)	15.63% (10)	3.35
My child is more confident in their reading skills as a result of the DPIL.	0% (0)	4.69% (3)	21.88% (14)	26.56% (17)	46.88% (30)	3.41
The Dolly Parton Imagination Library books keep my child's interest.	0% (0)	0% (0)	37.5% (24)	56.25% (36)	6.25% (4)	3.6
My child asks to read more frequently than before enrolling in the DPIL.	4.69% (3)	9.38% (6)	20.31% (13)	35.94% (23)	29.69% (19)	3.24
My child engages in imaginary play as a result of reading the DPIL books.	0% (0)	10.94% (7)	37.5% (24)	31.25% (20)	20.31% (13)	3.25

How often do you and your child read together since starting the Dolly Parton Imagination Library?



Comments:

- "6-7 Days/Week, if not more."
- "We read often before but enjoy the new variety each month."
- "Multiple times per day! We have read our first book 3 times now. Myself, her daddy and cousin have all read the little engine that could to her!"
- "I am a library director so we have monthly story times."
- "We read this much before too."

Impact

To learn about the parent's experience with DPIL, respondents were instructed to rate the following statements from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." The weighted average illustrates the overall average of responses on a scale of "1" to "4."

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)	Weighted Score (1) - (4)
I spend more time reading to my child than I did before entering into the DPIL.	1.61% (1)	24.19% (15)	43.55% (27)	30.65% (19)	3.03
I feel more confident in my reading skills as a parent due to the DPIL.	3.17% (2)	28.57% (18)	46.03% (29)	22.22% (14)	2.87
I understand the benefits of reading to my child as a result of the DPIL.	1.59% (1)	9.52% (6)	49.21% (31)	39.68% (25)	3.27
I look forward to lap time reading with my child as a result of the DPIL.	3.17% (2)	3.17% (2)	42.86% (27)	50.79% (32)	3.41

To learn about the parent's experience with DPIL activities, respondents were instructed to rate the following statements from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." The weighted average illustrates the overall average of responses on a scale of "1" to "4."

	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	DISAGREE (2)	AGREE (3)	STRONGLY AGREE (4)	N/A	WEIGHTED AVERAGE (1) - (4)
The DPIL activities are fun and offer quality family time for me and my child.	1.59% (1)	0% (0)	36.51% (23)	31.75% (20)	30.16% (19)	3.41
The DPIL activities reinforce reading skills to increase my child's learning.	1.59% (1)	0% (0)	31.75% (20)	34.92% (22)	31.75% (20)	3.47
The DPIL activities offer low-cost ideas that compliment my child's monthly books.	1.59% (1)	0% (0)	31.75% (20)	31.75% (20)	34.92% (22)	3.44
I am unfamiliar with the DPIL monthly activities.	30.16% (19)	26.98% (17)	12.7% (8)	14.29% (9)	15.87% (10)	2.13

Impact

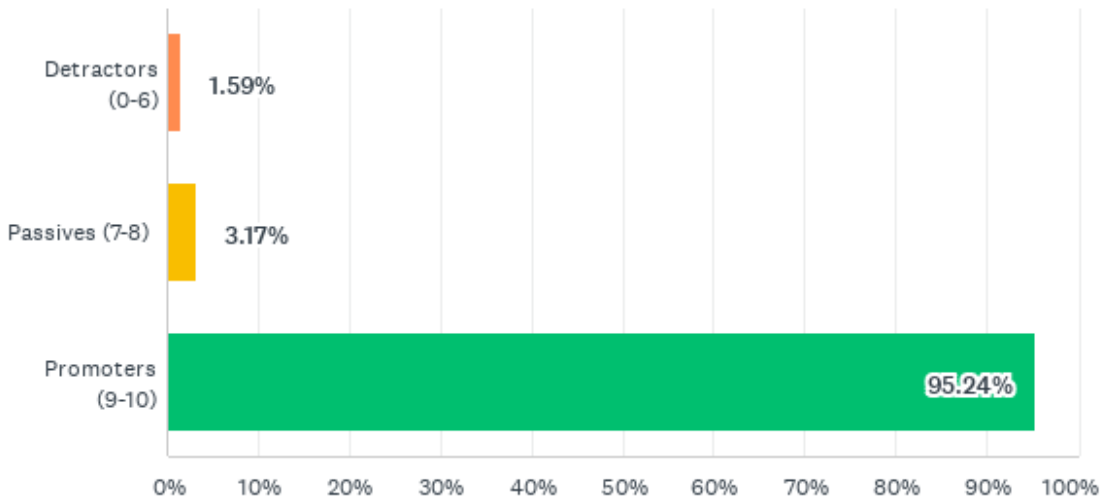
To better understand the impact of the program, parents were asked to provide a brief story about their child's experience participating in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

- *"He gets excited when I tell him he has received mail. We open it and look through it and then save the reading for before bed."*
- *"She sees me get the mail and if there is a book, she asks me for it right away. She loves looking at the pictures."*
- *"The guides in the front of the books help me know how to go beyond reading the text."*
- *"My daughters have both received books, however, my oldest has aged out. My oldest has learned so much and looks forward to having received her books, then. And now, she is more excited to receive her sister's books just to read them to her, to partake and show her imaginary play, and just in general to engage in reading! My youngest loves and gets extremely excited when we sit down for reading time! The activities will be wonderful as I have checked a few out, but they didn't match up with the books received, so I will be receiving the ones that do after having spoken with Robin. Our experience has been positive and enlightening month to month! We are grateful! Thank you kindly."*
- *"My daughter loves when she gets mail! This is one more piece of mail that she gets and lights up when she knows it is a book. She loves being read to."*
- *"Getting a new book monthly excites my son and it's like a fun gift that he can't wait to open and read! My older daughter loves it as well, we read it together!"*
- *"They are her favorite books. She looks forward to a new story every month."*
- *"My child is only 7 months old, but he loves when I read to him."*
- *"We have read our first book 3 times now. Myself, her daddy and cousin have all read the little engine that could to her! It is fostering a love for reading with my daughter and her older cousins!"*
- *"These books are many of our favorites to read."*
- *"My 4.5-year-old son loves these books, looks forward to them arriving, and always wants to read them right away. He enjoys looking at them at night before he goes to sleep, too."*
- *"My daughter sings several songs regularly because of the Twinkle, Twinkle with Eric Carle book she received from DPIL. Also, I'd like to note that I strongly disagreed with the statements in question 6 because I already valued all these things *before* participating in DPIL, so DPIL did not change anything; it just means there are even more books around our house that we read regularly (multiple books every day at many times of day)."*
- *"We wait for the mail to come and read it the same day, keep it out to read again and again since it is the new book."*
- *"My 3 has been receiving for about 2 years and always gets so excited when each book arrives. She wants to read it right away every time."*
- *"She loves when a new book has come."*
- *"My children love when they get their books. They can't wait to read it when it comes."*

- *"My child's favorite book is one we received from DPIL."*
- *"I absolutely love getting these books. My oldest has aged out (which makes her sad) but we still read the books together."*
- *"My child loves getting her new books. She may like some books better than others, but she always asks me to read them more than once."*
- *"Enjoy the books! Always excited to open."*
- *"My children look forward to snuggles and story time thanks to DPIL."*
- *"We love getting our new books in the mail! My daughter's favorite book so far is llama llama red pajamas. I think this program is so amazing and very important in making sure children have books available and helping kids develop a love for reading!"*
- *"My Grandchildren always argue over who is going to open the books when they come in. Rock paper scissors it is lolol."*
- *"We get 2 books and they come at different times, and we love that!! The kids love to watch for the mail and get so excited to see who got the book that day! Sometimes we wait until bedtime that night to read, other times we have to open it and read it right that minute!! I love the excitement that them getting their very own mail brings!!"*
- *"He really likes the one with find Fergus he likes that one he pretends that he is hiding, and I have to try to find him."*
- *"We LOVE getting the books each month because my children both LOVE to read and love getting new material!"*
- *"We are a book loving family, but my sweet 3 year old loves reading his Dolly Parton books. He loves to flip to the end, and always exclaims "Dolly Parton sent us this book! This book from Dolly Parton!"*
- *"My children love to find their book in the mail every month. They run to their room and read it that night before bed. Then we read it again for the next few nights!"*
- *"He loves to reread the books over and over. The new books capture his imagination, and he asks tons of questions. He laughs and has so much fun."*
- *"She looks forward to checking the mail for her book each month, we read the new book as soon as she gets it, now she likes to have a book read to her every night, she has also started to try and read to her little sister."*
- *"My son who is 1 years old loves to look at the pictures in the books provided each month and he will say that animal that he recognizes in the book."*
- *"My child is very proud that his name is on the label on the back of the book and is directly addressed to him."*
- *"My child is only one, so I could answer a lot of the questions. However, his attention span doesn't stick for a whole book, I keep reading to him while he plays. My 6-year-old loves that my 1-year-old gets the books every month. He aged out of the program, but we still do read every night. He enjoys the books that the little one gets in the mail every month and gets excited when they arrive."*
- *"My babies get very excited for the new books! So do I, I always start to cry thinking about how many kids Mrs. Dolly is sending books to. She's the most wonderful human being in the history of humans."*
- *"My daughter loves the book Tad and Dad that was delivered. This was several months ago but she still grabs it every time she wants us to read to her. She now jumps and crocks like a frog when we read it."*
- *"She likes going through them and when her brothers or parents read them to her she gets all excited."*

- "My little boy loves these books and points to Dolly's photo on the back of each book asking if this is the nice lady giving him these books. His favorite book is "spending" a book of how a little bunny learns to manage his allowance. Great life lesson."
- "Whenever my daughter's book of the month comes, she gets so excited then she hugs the book like it is a long-lost friend."
- "New books are always exciting. We walk to the mailbox together and when she sees the book, she claps!"

Parents were asked on a scale of 0-10, "How likely is it that you would recommend the DPIL to a friend or family member?" Overwhelmingly, parents continue to be our best promoters of the program and a significant strategy for outreach to other families. As well, this signifies the extreme satisfaction with the program.



Outreach to families with children birth - age 5 is imperative for program growth. Recognizing that our target audience is families living in poverty or deep poverty, respondents were asked, "Please tell us if you receive assistance from any of the following programs (mark all that apply)."

55% of the respondents indicated that they receive one or more of the following benefits.

None of the above	45.00% (27)
-TANF (Temporary Financial Assistance)	3.33% (2)
-Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	43.33% (26)
-SNAP (Food Benefits)	18.33% (11)
-Medicaid	30.00% (18)
-Food Pantries	13.33% (8)
-Every Bottom Covered (Diaper Assistance)	15.00% (9)